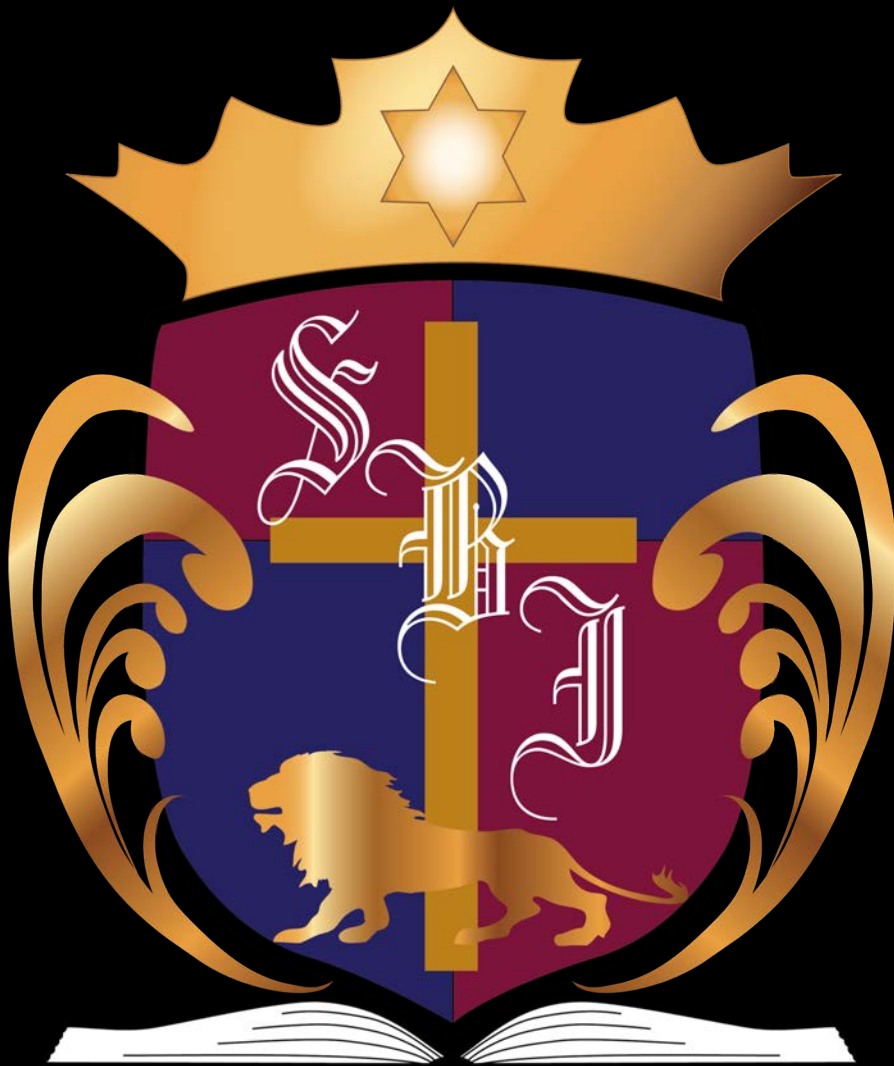


Scotfield Biblical Institute

Ezekiel 38 & 39



Scotfield Biblical Institute

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher



The Coming Allied Invasion of Israel An Exposition of Ezekiel Chapters 38 & 39

Daniel E. Woodhead, Ph.D.

Introduction:

God in His divine providence has given us the Holy Scriptures, which contains many yet unfulfilled prophecies regarding future events on the earth. Over the next four sessions we will be examining one of these prophecies found in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters of the Old Testament book of Ezekiel. The OT is filled with prophecies many of which pertaining to Christ's first appearance on earth have already been fulfilled. Most OT prophecies however, remain unfulfilled but will be in the future.

One such prophecy is the Allied Invasion of Israel by the Germans, Muslim nations all led by the Russians. These nations have all in one form or another implemented focused severe persecutions of the nation of Israel. As we will see in examining this prophecy in detail that God uses these events to repay those nations for causing harm to the Jews, which He refers to as the "Apple of His Eye" (Zechariah 2:8). To God alone belongs vengeance and no body can repay the way He can (Romans 12:19; Deuteronomy 32:35). In fact the Lord arranged the nations around the plan He has for the Jews (Deuteronomy 32:7-9).

Approximately 4350 years ago God selected a man from the general population of nations called Abraham to receive a special covenant. The Abrahamic Covenant is the first unconditional covenant that God made with Israel. The Abrahamic Covenant promised a seed, land, and blessings. The three major promises of this covenant were personal promises to Abraham, national promises to Israel and universal promises to all the people of the earth. God promised that He would bless him and make him a blessing to others, to make his name great, to give him many descendants, to make him the father of a multitude of nations, to give him the land of Canaan for always and to bless them that blessed Abraham and to curse them that cursed him. (Gen 12; 13; 15 & 17) God also made national promises concerning Israel. They are: to make a great nation of his descendants; to give land from the eastern most branch of the Nile delta called the river of Egypt to the Euphrates to his descendants forever; and to give the Abrahamic covenant to his descendants forever (Gen 17:19; 21; 26:2-4; Gen 28:12-15). Finally, God made

universal covenants to Abraham that would affect everybody on the earth; it would affect all families of the earth who would be blessed.

This promise is intended to be applicable to Israel regarding the blessing and cursing effects. Parts of the covenant have already been fulfilled. For example God did bless Abraham with wealth. His name is great and Israel is a great nation. The blessings to all have been given to all through the oracles of God, which only the Jews received, and as a result these blessings brought forth the Messiah. The promise of the land has not been fulfilled yet. Abraham's descendants are indeed in the land in unbelief and do not have the boundaries set forth in Scripture yet. God has made some irrevocable, unilateral commitments, formal covenants or promises, and one of His most essential characteristics is that He delights in making and keeping His promises. Many modern churches fail to appreciate the seriousness of these covenants and the fact that the Land Covenant, Davidic, Covenant and New Covenant all flow from the Abrahamic Covenant.

Abraham was a Gentile when this covenant was first made. It first occurs in Genesis Chapter 12, and includes seven "I Wills":

1. I will make of thee a great nation,
2. I will bless thee,
3. I will make thy name great;
4. Thou shalt be a blessing;
5. I will bless them that bless thee,
6. **I will curse him that curseth thee:**
7. In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. Genesis 12:2-3

It is to this sixth promise that we begin our study of Ezekiel 38 and 39.

OUTLINE:

1. Introduction & Abrahamic Covenant
2. Ezekiel, The Prophet and Priest of Israel in Babylon
3. Russian Persecutions
4. Soviet Persecutions
5. German Persecutions
6. Muslim Nation Persecutions
7. World Empires Which Lead to a One-World Government
8. Divine Retribution
9. Who are the Invading Nations, How do we Know?
10. Where do they come from and where do they invade?
11. Why are they Invading? Gog's Perspective; God's Perspective.
12. What Happens to the Invaders?
13. How does it Happen?
14. God's Name is Sanctified
15. The Seven Years of Burning
16. The Seven Months of Clean Up

Jewish Persecution:

Russian:

From 1721 on the official doctrine of Imperial Russia was openly anti-Jewish. For example when the Russians captured part of the Ukraine in 1727 it was cleared of Jews. As a result of the official doctrine being anti-Jewish, Russia has never been a healthy country with economic freedom and safety for all its citizens.

The Czar established a Pale of Settlement that included Poland and Crimea. Jews were supposed to remain in the Pale and required special permission to move to Russia proper.

Specifically, in 1786, Catherine the Great of Russia ordered all Jews in her domain to move to an area in southwestern Russia and Poland known as the "Pale of Settlement." The Pale consisted of twenty-five provinces that included Ukraine, Lithuania, Byelorussia, Crimea, and part of Poland. Arriving in massive numbers, the Jews eventually dispersed and settled throughout this region. Jews were specifically expelled from Moscow and St. Petersburg and forced into the Pale. Later they were also expelled from rural areas within the Pale and forced to live only in shtetls. The shtetl is Yiddish for small town.

Czar Alexander II a Romanov, who was ultimately assassinated, was known for his suppression of national minorities. Under his rule Jews could not commission Christian servants, could not own land, and were restricted in their travel.

Czar Alexander III, the second from the last Romanov, escalated anti-Jewish policies and sought to popularize "folk anti-Judaism," which portrayed the Jews as "Christ-killers" and the oppressors of the Slavic Christian victims. A large-scale wave of anti-Jewish pogroms swept southwestern Russia in 1881, after Jews were wrongly blamed for the assassination of Alexander II. In the 1881 outbreak, there were pogroms in one hundred sixty-six Russian towns, thousands of Jewish homes were destroyed, many families reduced to poverty. Large numbers of men, women, and children were injured and some killed. The new Czar, Alexander III, blamed the Jews for the riots and on May 15, 1882 introduced the so-called "Temporary Regulations" that stayed in effect for more than thirty years and came to be known as the "May Laws."

The systematic policy of discrimination banned Jews from rural areas and towns of fewer than ten thousand people, even within the Pale, assuring the slow death of many shtetls. The shtetl was typically a small town with a large Jewish population in pre-Holocaust Central and Eastern Europe. In 1887, the quotas placed on the number of Jews allowed into secondary and higher educations were tightened. Strict restrictions prohibited Jews from practicing many professions. In A.D. 1886, an Edict of Expulsion was enforced on Jews of Kiev. In A.D. 1891, Moscow was cleansed of its Jews (except the few deemed useful) and the city's authorities closed a newly built synagogue. The Czar's brother championed this effort. Czar Alexander III refused to curtail repressive practices and reportedly noted: "But we must never forget that the Jews have crucified our Master and have shed his precious blood." The restrictions placed on education, traditionally highly valued in Jewish communities, resulted in ambition to excel over their peers and increased emigration rate.

In 1905 the Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod (Russian Orthodox Church) conducted a pogrom in Yekaterinoslav. Konstantin Pobedonostsev, the Chief Procurator, was the Czar's mentor, friend, and adviser. He was reported as saying that one-third of Russia's Jews were expected to emigrate, one-third to accept baptism, and one-third to starve. The repressive legislation was repeatedly revised. Many historians noted the concurrence of these state-enforced anti-Jewish policies with waves of pogroms that continued until 1884, with at least tacit government knowledge and in some cases policemen were seen inciting or joining the mob.

This Romanov dynasty caused the most severe focused persecutions of the Jews. The last czar was Nicholas II, ended czarism for good by abdicating in 1917. The Bolshevik Revolution finally broke out openly in 1917 and thus Russia fell and despotic communism began.

Soviet Union:

Early in his career Stalin engaged in terrible persecutions in the Ukraine. Because of the Czars, this region, including the Pale, was highly populated with Jews. Beginning in 1929, more than 5,000 Ukrainian scholars, scientists, cultural and religious leaders were falsely accused of plotting an armed revolt and arrested. They were either shot without a trial, or deported to prison camps.

He also imposed the Soviet system of land management known as "collectivization." Under this system all property escheated to the state. In a country where eighty percent of the people were traditionally village farmers, this new system resulted in the seizure of all privately owned farmlands and livestock. Some researchers estimate that ten million persons were removed from their homes, transported on railroad box cars and deported to "special settlements" in the wilderness of Siberia and up to a third of them eventually dying. Eleven percent of these were Jewish. Men and older boys, along with childless women and unmarried girls, also became slave-workers in Soviet-run mines and big industrial projects. In the Ukraine, with no private land ownership the village farmers became workers on large collective farms. Anyone refusing to participate was deported.

A propaganda campaign was started using eager young Communist activists. Despite the propaganda, coercion and threats, the people continued to resist through rebellion and sabotage. They burned their own homes rather than surrender them. They took back their property, tools and farm animals from the collectives, harassed and even killed local Soviet authorities. Soviet troops and secret police put down the rebellion. They fired warning shots first then, they fired directly at the people. Stalin's secret police (GPU, predecessor of the KGB) waged a campaign of terror to break the people's will. GPU squads systematically attacked and killed uncooperative farmers. But the resistance continued. In Moscow, Stalin responded to their defiance by deliberately causing mass starvation, killing millions.

By mid 1932, nearly seventy five percent of the farms in the Ukraine had been forcibly collectivized. During August and October of that year and again in January 1933, Stalin ordered a drastic mandatory increase of the foodstuff that was to be shipped to the Soviet Union. This left little to no remaining food to feed the people of the Ukraine.

Much of the abundant wheat crop harvested by the Ukrainians that year was dumped on the foreign market to generate cash to aid Stalin's Five Year Plan for the modernization of the Soviet Union and to help finance his massive military buildup. Ukrainian Communists urgently appealed to Moscow for a reduction in the grain quotas and also asked for emergency food aid. Stalin responded by denouncing them. He immediately commanded more than 100,000 fiercely loyal Russian soldiers to purge the Ukrainian Communist Party. The Soviets then sealed off the borders of the Ukraine, preventing any food from entering, in effect turning the country into a gigantic concentration camp. Soviet police troops once inside the Ukraine went house to house seizing any stored up food and leaving farm families without a morsel. All food was considered to be the "sacred" property of the State. Anyone caught stealing State property, even an ear of corn or stubble of wheat, could be shot or imprisoned for not less than ten years.

Starvation quickly ensued throughout the Ukraine. In the cities, children and adults who had already flocked there from the countryside were dropping dead in the streets, with their bodies carted away in horse-drawn wagons to be dumped in mass graves while police and Communist Party officials remained quite well fed. Desperate Ukrainians ate leaves off bushes and trees, killed dogs, cats, frogs, mice and birds and then cooked them. Others, gone mad with hunger, resorted to cannibalism, with parents sometimes even eating their own children.

Meanwhile, nearby Soviet-controlled granaries were said to be bursting at the seams from huge stocks of "reserve" grain, which had not yet been shipped out of the Ukraine. In some locations, grain and potatoes were piled in the open, protected by barbed wire and armed GPU guards who shot down anyone attempting to take the food. Farm animals, considered necessary for production, were allowed to be fed, while the people living among them had nothing to eat.

By the spring of 1933, at the height of the famine, an estimated twenty five thousand persons died every day in the Ukraine. Entire villages were perishing. In Europe, America and Canada, persons of Ukrainian descent and others responded to news reports of the famine by sending in food supplies. But Soviet authorities halted all food shipments at the border.

It was the official policy of the Soviet Union to deny the existence of a famine and thus to refuse any outside assistance. Anyone claiming that there was in fact a famine was accused of spreading anti-Soviet propaganda. Inside the Soviet Union, a person could be arrested for even using the word "famine" or "hunger" or "starvation" in a sentence. The Soviets bolstered their famine denial by duping members of the foreign press and international celebrities through carefully staged photo opportunities in the Soviet Union and the Ukraine.

George Bernard Shaw, along with a group of British socialites, visited the Soviet Union and was given a good impression, which he broadcast out. Former French Premier Edouard Herriot was given a five-day stage-managed tour of the Ukraine, viewing spruced-up streets in Kiev and inspecting a "model" collective farm. He too, came away with a favorable impression and even declared there was indeed no famine. Stalin carefully selected liberals who embraced the socialistic goals the communists pursued. Their visits were carefully managed so they would only view unrealistic scenes of contented farmers.

Most of the foreign press corps yielded to the Soviet demand and wrote stories sympathetic to the official Soviet propaganda line, denouncing that the famine existed. Among those was Pulitzer Prize winning reporter Walter Durante of the New York Times who sent one dispatch stating "...all talk of famine now is ridiculous."

By the end of 1933, nearly twenty five percent of the population of the Ukraine, including three million children, had perished.

Germany:

Within the militantly intolerant and violent Nazi Third Reich, Jews were considered to be foul, have shameful lives, and were subjected to horrible treatment. The Nazis wanted to first expel them from Germany and then later to subject them to cruel treatment as well as painful death simply because they were Jews. The Nazis used the same despicable kind of language found in Martin Luther's *The Jews and Their Lies* when describing them publicly. It also appeared in Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. Nazi Germany did not invent anything new regarding the treatment of Jews. They simply amplified the anti-Jewish attitude inherent in European Christianity and its history. The constant "question" which rose in Hitler's party and later in his administration was, what do we do with the Jews? The issue became known as the "Jewish Question." They attributed the Jews as the source of all economic and social problems. Their answer was found in 1941 which became known as the "Final Solution."

On September 16, 1919 Hitler entered the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP) and had imposed himself as its Chairman by July 1921. Hitler discovered that he had a powerful talent for oratory. His speeches captivated audiences by his impassioned conviction and gift for self-dramatization.

Many said he was demonically driven. One of the early founders of the Nazi party was Dietrich Eckhart. As he lay dying in 1923 he made the following statement about Hitler:

Follow Hitler! He will dance but it is I who has called the tune! I have initiated him into the "Secret Doctrine," opened his centers in vision and given him the means to communicate with the Powers. Do not mourn for me: I shall have influenced history more than any other German."

Eckhart was a dedicated Satanist immersed in black magic and an occultist active in the German occultic organization known as the Thule group. Eckhart claimed to have a "satanic annunciation" through séances letting him know that he was the forerunner of the "Antichrist". Hitler was obviously not the "Antichrist" but nonetheless he was an "Antichrist". Eckhart saw himself as sort of an occult equivariant of "John the Baptist."

Hitler focused his propaganda against the visible, internal enemy No. 1, the "Jew," who was responsible for all Germany's domestic problems. In the twenty-five-point program of the National Socialists democratic Workers Party (NSDAP) announced on February 24, 1920, the exclusion of the Jews from the Volk community, the myth of Aryan race supremacy and extreme nationalism. His ultimate goal was the total removal of the Jews."

In 1921 two measures were announced at the annual Party Rally in Nuremberg, becoming known as the Nuremberg Laws. The first law, The Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor, prohibited marriages and extra-marital intercourse between “Jews ” (the name was now officially used in place of “non-Aryans ”) and “Germans ” and also the employment of “German ” females under forty-five in Jewish households. The second law, The Reich Citizenship Law, stripped Jews of their German citizenship and introduced a new distinction between “Reich citizens ” and “nationals.”

Although the Jews were being forced out of the country, after the Nuremberg Laws, the German government began forced deportations of Jews. Most of the deportations were to Poland. Since the Russian Czars had sent many Jews to the Pale, which was in Eastern Poland and the Ukraine the population of Jews there significantly increased.

As the Nazis marched into Poland on September 1, 1939 the SS and The Gestapo followed after setting up the concentration and extermination camps while rounding the Jews in ghettos. There they immediately began persecuting and killing Jews. The methods first used were machine gunning and firing squads. Soon after the Final Solution was devised in 1941. The first crematorium was operational in Auschwitz in August 1940 but it was not until autumn of 1941 that Zyklon B gas began to be used to expedite the mass murders.

On May 1, 1945 Hitler committed suicide. Europe was devastated and he had killed a minimum of six million Jews during the twelve years of his totalitarian rule.

MUSLIM PERSECUTIONS:

As a direct result of the Nazi persecutions, on November 29, 1947, the United Nations created the State of Israel. On May 14, 1948 Israel’s Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, declared the creation of the State of Israel. Arab League members Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq declared war and announced their rejection of the United Nations partition decision. Saudi-Arabia and Yemen also sent forces to participate in the invasion. This was not the first time that Muslims have persecuted Jews.

In A.D. 627, while fleeing a Meccan tribe, Muhammad the founder of Islam, decided to attack the Jewish tribe of the Qurayza, which had refused to convert to Islam. He had trenches dug in the marketplace of Medina and according to Muslim sources beheaded between six and nine hundred Jewish men. One was reported to have converted to Islam and his life was spared. The women, children and property were divided among the Muslims. Jihad or holy war is a permanent state of war for Islam and it does not include the possibility of any true peace, ever. It has been this way from the inception of Islam and it is true today. Only the naïve and ignorant fall victim to the untruth of “Islam being a peaceful religion.” It never has been. It seeks world domination and will stop at nothing to achieve its ends.

In 1948, after the United Nations voted to give Israel statehood, five Muslim armies (Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon and Iraq) immediately invaded Israel. The stated purpose of this invasion was to "push the Jews into the sea", in other words, genocide. Assam Pasha, Secretary-General of the Arab League, declared their intentions: "This will be a war of extermination and a momentous massacre which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades. “What Hitler didn't finish three years earlier, the

Arabs would finish once and for all.” A Nazi collaborator, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, led the Arabs of the former British Mandate of Palestine. He was charged at the Nuremberg trials before escaping in 1946. Al-Husseini actively supported Hitler's aim to exterminate the Jews in World War II. The Jews prevailed with only WW I weapons against all these Muslim nations.

In 1949 Israel signed armistice agreements with Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Transjordan, (which in April 1949 changed its name to Jordan). At this time Jordan annexed Judea and Samaria. This region became a source of many terrorists' attacks against Israel's citizens. In 1945 there were about 870,000 Jews living in the surrounding Arab countries. The Muslims call them the Dhimmi. During 1948 and 1949 the Arabs persecuted these Jews. Their personal and real property were confiscated. Yemen, Egypt, Libya, Syria and Iraq had anti-Jewish riots. Zionism was declared to be a capital crime in Iraq. Approximately 600,000 Jewish refugees left the Arab states and were welcomed into Israel by the Ashkenazi Jews living there at that time. The Jews became full citizens of Israel. Due to the wishes of their Arab leaders, the Arabs in Israel did not become citizens but remained in internment camps and remained “refugees.”

Having lost in battle, Palestinian Arab terrorist groups, called "Fedayeen", began systematic raids against the Israeli civilian population. Thirteen hundred Israelis were killed and wounded by Arab terrorists between 1949 and 1956.

The Americans were helping the Jews and the Soviets aided the Muslims. The transfer of power from the Jews and the Muslims went to the United States and the Soviet Union.

On May 15, 1967 Nasser of Egypt ordered a blockade of the Strait of Tiran. This blockade cut off Israel's southern access to the Red Sea and beyond. By May 31, 1967 Egypt had moved 100,000 troops, one thousand tanks, and five hundred heavy guns into the Sinai. By June 4, Arab forces outnumbered Israel three to one as they poised on Israel's borders. This was Israel's Six Day War and it was fought on three fronts, against three countries, in three overlapping stages. In the south, Israel engaged and defeated the Egyptians. In the central region, Israel engaged and defeated the Jordanians. In the north, Israel engaged and defeated the Syrians. In each of these theaters, Israel gained significant territory that would serve as its own buffers in future years.

On the morning of June 5, 1967 the Israeli Air Force destroyed almost the entire Egyptian Air Force (more than three hundred planes) in less than three hours. Israel's armored divisions, under the leadership of General Ariel Sharon, also launched a lightning attack on the same day. More than eight hundred Egyptian tanks had been destroyed, and thousands of soldiers were taken as prisoners of war. Nasser later acknowledged that eighty percent of Egypt's Russian-supplied military equipment had been lost in the Sinai debacle. Finally, at 8:00 p.m. on June 8, Nasser accepted a cease-fire.

From 1948 to 1967, Jerusalem was a divided city. The Arab Legion of Jordan had occupied East Jerusalem, including the Old City, since the War of Independence. The Jordanian troops had decimated the Jewish Quarter of the Old City, blowing up its synagogues and destroying every vestige of Jewish life there. During the initial battles with Egypt, Israel actually notified King Hussein that it had no intention of attacking his country. Hussein, however, believed Nasser's lies and joined the Arabs. When the Arab Legion began to shell Western Jerusalem, the Israelis swiftly counterattacked, with

success. Paratroopers landed and attacked from the Mount of Olives, entering the Lion Gate from the east. Israel was careful to minimize the use of artillery, which could have made their attack much easier with less loss of life. This was done out of respect for the numerous holy sites within the ancient walls. By June 8, Israeli troops were gazing at Herod's stones of the Western Wall. Although Jerusalem was the central prize, Israel also captured in those four fierce days the areas of biblical Judea and Samaria. (Now called the West bank)

Egypt's ally in the north was Syria. From their heavily fortified bunkers and miles of trenches along the Golan Heights, Syrian gunners had harassed the Jewish farmers and fishermen of the Huleh Valley and Sea of Galilee for nineteen years. The problem for the Israelis was that the Syrians literally held the high ground, and their Russian sponsors had helped them to fortify it well. With Syria also threatening Israel's destruction, the army saw an opportunity to end this threat to its northern citizens once and for all. The battle for the Golan was difficult. This was not a desert, like the Sinai, where tanks could maneuver easily. Furthermore, the Syrians had planted numerous mines to deter any Israeli response to its constant shelling. The Air Force prepared the way by landing paratroopers behind the Syrian lines. Finally, Israeli bulldozers were able to clear the way so the armored units could batter the Syrian troops and drive them deep into the Golan. Syria accepted a cease-fire on June 10, 1967.

Although it was an amazing military victory, the Six Day War left more than seven hundred Israelis dead and more than twenty five hundred wounded. Although figures were never officially released, Arab casualties were conservatively estimated at fifteen thousand. The Six Day War established Israel as a major military power, but it unexpectedly cast it in the role of "occupier", a burden that has proven hard to bear for forty-three years. Israel eventually returned the Sinai to Egypt (after another war in 1973), when President Sadat finally acknowledged their *legitimate* existence. Israel remains in control of the Golan Heights, unwilling to see it return to a nest of bunkers and artillery positions.

In an effort to force Israel to surrender captured lands, Egypt and Syria jointly attacked Israel on October 6, 1973, on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar. Other Muslim states contributed troops and financial support. Caught by surprise, Israel suffered severe losses in human life and equipment. Following an Egyptian refusal to accept a cease-fire and a Soviet airlift to the Muslim states, the United States sent an airlift to Israel enabling a recovery from earlier setbacks. Saudi Arabia then led the Arab world in an oil embargo imposed on the United States and other western nations.

In the years following the 1973 war, Israel's enemies realized that they could not defeat Israel on the battlefield. Therefore they turned to diplomatic warfare and sought to weaken Israel's international diplomatic position.

S.A.A. Maududi, a Muslim, wrote the following words in *Jihad in Islam* in 1991.

“Islam wishes to destroy all States and Governments anywhere on the face of the earth, which are opposed to the ideology and program of Islam. Islam requires the earth - not just a portion, but the whole planet. And that God's Law (Shariah) should be enforced in the world by force of arms. Truth cannot

be confined within geographical borders. The allegiance of a Muslim does not rest on his domicile in the country which is his, but on the faith to which he belongs ... wherever there is the rule of Islam, there is his own country.”

The term Intifada is an Arabic name for “shaking off.” It refers to an uprising in the so-called Palestinian territories starting in 1987. It involves demonstrations, strikes, riots and general violence performed in both the Gaza Strip (ancient Philistia) and the West Bank (Ancient Judea & Samaria). There are three principal groups behind the Intifada; Islamic Jihad, The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Hamas. Hamas and Islamic Jihad both call for an independent State for the Palestinians within the borders of Israel. PLO’s goal is to organize terrorist attacks on Israel. These three groups have been the seedbeds of violence directed against the Israelis since they were established. The violence will continue until the Lord removes the Muslim nations from the earth along with the Germans and the Russians when He brings the coalition invasion against Israel led by Gog of Russia.

The Times of the Gentiles

The times of the Gentiles are that long period of time from the Babylonian captivity (586 B.C.) until the Second Coming of Jesus. During this time the Gentiles have had control over the city of Jerusalem. There have been times of temporary Jewish control over the city.

1. Maccabean Period (164-63 B.C.)
2. First Jewish Revolt against Rome (A.D. 66-70)
3. The second Jewish Revolt (the Bar-Kochba Revolt) against Rome (A.D. 132-135)
4. Since the 1967 Six-Day War, which is temporary, because Jerusalem *will* be trodden down by the Gentiles for at least another 3 ½ years during the Great Tribulation. (Rev 11:1-2)

Any Jewish takeover of the city before the Second Coming will be temporary, and does not mean that the times of the Gentiles have ended. The Times of the Gentiles can only end when Gentiles can’t tread down Jerusalem any more. The Times of the Gentiles, is a period of time when four Gentile empires will follow one another in sequence, with the Fourth Empire going through several different stages. But eventually this will give way to God’s setting up His own Kingdom. While the Gentile empires are of human origin; the Kingdom of the Stone (Daniel 2: 35; 44-45) is of divine origin. While the Gentile empires are all temporary, God’s kingdom is eternal.

It is necessary to have some basic realization of *power* in human relationships. This power over the world shifts from person to person and empire to empire. All the while though God remains in control affecting His will is expressed in a minimum of two characteristics; Creative Will and Permissive Will.

Since our study is focusing on the coming Allied Invasion of Israel it is important to direct our attention to the Fourth Empire. Both Daniel passages (Chapters 2 & 7) make it clear that the Fourth Gentile Empire begins with the end of the third empire (Greek) and continues until Messiah comes to set up His Kingdom. The Fourth Empire is an

Imperialistic Empire. Imperialism is simply a policy of extending a country's influence through diplomacy or military force. This empire is diverse from all the rest. It goes through five distinct stages. Rome is only the first of the stages. Rome is not the name of the successive stages. I realize that some Bible teachers believe that there will be a revival of the old Roman Empire but the text never says this. It is man's speculation that leads to that idea. What Rome did that was different than all the other empires was to establish the imperialist form of government. It is this form that the Bible speaks of as the Fourth Gentile Empire not just Rome. There is no break or gap in the imperialist form of government on the earth from the initiation of the Roman Empire until Christ returns. Nowhere in Scripture is this stated. This form will go through five successive stages. We need to study those to see where history fits in this exposition.

1. **The United Stage-Rome** is the first stage of the imperialist form of government. The first stage or the United Stage started about 43 B.C and lasted until A.D. 364 . However there were five types of government that Rome went through from its origin and in its development, which is referenced in Daniel chapter seven.
2. The second stage or the Empire of Imperialism was the **Two Division Stage**. This stage was foreseen by Dan 2 (Legs of Iron) but not by Daniel 7. It began in A.D. 364 when Emperor Valentinian divided the Roman Empire into an east and west division. There was an earlier division in A.D. 285 that was of short duration. The emperor Constantine in A.D. 312-313 reunited the empire. The A.D. 364 division was permanent. The Western Headquarters were in Rome and the Eastern Headquarters in Constantinople. This lasted until 1453 when it collapsed in the Turkish invasion. When Constantinople fell the political rulers, scribes, and scholars fled north into Russia and infiltrated the government there, where they set up an imperialist form of government. The rulers called themselves *Czars*, which is Russian for "Caesar." Later Russia began calling itself the Third Roman Empire. Eventually, the eastern balance of power was centered in the Soviet Union and included the Communist block of nations. When European communism collapsed the eastern balance of power shifted to Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Presently power transfers are still occurring with Islam becoming a major eastern power. More settling is sure to occur in the future until this Two-Division Stage gives way to the as of yet future One-World Government Stage (The Allied Invasion). The western division of power remained in Rome from 364 until 476 when Rome fell. From there it shifted to France, especially the power gained by Charlemagne in A.D. 800. He called his domain the Holy Roman Empire of the Frankish Nation. In 962 Otto I of Germany defeated the Franks and set up the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. The leaders called themselves *Kaiser*, which is German for "Caesar." Since then, especially after World War I, the western balance of power has been centered in the democratic nations of the west. So the Two-Division Stage, which began in A. D. 364, continues to this day and there may be some shifting yet to come before the east-west balance becomes the third stage.
3. All the remaining stages (3) of the Empire of Imperialism are yet future to us today in 2010. Daniel 7:23 clearly states that at some time the Fourth Empire will *devour the whole earth*. Rome never did this. Rome did not even extend to the

borders conquered by the Greeks under Alexander the Great. So the Imperialist form of government will at some time exercise control over the whole earth. Rome must not be seen as the total of the Fourth Empire only one stage of the Empire of Imperialism. The Allied invasion of Israel, which will occur prior to the Great Tribulation, will cause the Russian and Muslim nations to lose their authority. (Ezekiel 38:1-39:16) This event will give way to the **One-World Government Stage**.

4. **The Ten-Division Stage** was seen in both Daniel 2 with the ten toes and in Daniel 7 with the ten horns. This stage is clearly stated to come out of the One World Government Stage. The Bible is silent as to *why* the division occurs. These ten kingdoms will cover the *entire earth* and not be limited to some specific continent such as Europe. They will begin some time before the Great Tribulation and continue into the middle of the Tribulation. To be consistent with Daniel's prophecy perhaps one could consider the Club of Rome's recommendation that the world be divided up into ten administrative districts in avoidance of economic collapse. The Club of Rome is a global think tank and center of worldly innovation and initiative. As a non-profit, non-governmental futurist organization, it brings together scientists, economists, businessmen, international high civil servants, heads of state and former heads of state from all five continents who are convinced that the future of humankind is not pre-ordained and that each human being can contribute to the improvement of our societies.
5. **The Antichrist Stage** follows the Ten-Kingdom Stage. The Antichrist rises to power during the Ten-Kingdom stage and eventually he uproots three of the ten kings and the other seven submit to his authority. This then becomes the Stage of Absolute Imperialism. Once this submission occurs the Antichrist Stage officially begins. This stage is the fifth and final stage of Gentile World Imperialism.

It is very valuable to understand the course of the Times of the Gentiles so we can get an understanding of biblical eschatology itself.

In a List We Can Complete the Progressively Revealed Revelation of Scripture for The Times of the Gentiles:

1. The Babylonian Empire
2. The Medo-Persian Empire
3. The Hellenistic Empire
 - a. The United Stage
 - b. The Four Division Stage

(Developmental Prelude to the fourth Gentile Empire)

- a. The Tarquin Kings-The First Head 753-510 B.C
- b. The Censors-The Second Head 510-494 B.C.
- c. The Plebeians-The Third Head 494-390 B.C
- d. The Republicans-The Fourth Head 390-59 B.C.
- e. The Triumvirate-The Fifth Head 59-27 B.C.

4. The Fourth Gentile Empire-Imperialism – The Sixth Head = a-d
 - a. The United Stage-The Roman Empire
 - b. The Two Division State-The East-West Balance of Power
 - c. The One-World Government Stage
 - d. The Ten-Kingdom Stage-The Ten Horns (Ten Kings)
 - e. The Antichrist Stage-The Seventh Head (The Eleventh Horn and then the Eighth Horn)
5. The Messianic Kingdom

The Coalition Invasion of Israel

The Bible is not explicit regarding the precise dates upon which most future end time events will occur. It does however give the observant student of the Scriptures a sequential chronology of those events. Christ for example, wanted His followers to know certain aspects of the end time events so they would not be caught unaware of them if they unfolded during their lifetime. He did not tell exactly when they would take place. In fact he clearly stated that the exact date would not be known (Matt 24:36). Christ clearly explained the events leading up to the great final battle and what preparations His believers should undertake to avoid it (Luke 21:36).

The timing of other prophetic events in the Grand Master Plan of God for His earth are similarly given in terms of relative timing to other events. The precise timing at which it will happen is unknown but we know in which chronological section, the grand sequence of end time events will occur. One such prophecy is the Allied Invasion of Israel by a group of coalition forces, which have severely persecuted Israel in years past. The world is setting the stage for this prophecy to be fulfilled by various peace negotiations and demanding that Israel give up land and most importantly their security.

In order to fully understand this prophecy and its proper placement within the broad overall Grand Master Plan of human history it is important to carefully evaluate all aspects of a given Bible passage. One must keep in mind that the more *literally* the Biblical text is taken, the more *fundamentally* the theology becomes. Conversely, the *less literally* the biblical text the more *liberal* theology becomes. The liberal route spiritualizes the text with some ethereal unintended rendering or views it all as hyperbole then it becomes difficult to grasp God's message to His people. There is only one interpretation of the Bible. It is up to the reader to realize it through the utilization of proper grammar, syntax and basic understanding of normal parts of speech. It may have been a while since the Bible student has taken basic grammar, but that does not invalidate the obligation to utilize common grammar in deciphering the biblical text. God did not speak to us with a divided mind and allow us to decide for each person what the message means. It is up to the student of Scripture to discern the meaning by sound hermeneutics utilizing proper grammar, syntax and figures of speech to understand the written word and fully understand that God Has Spoken. Some would even say it is impossible to know absolute truth. This is not true and Christ taught that He is truth.

The biblical text as stated in Ezekiel 38:1-39:16 describe an invasion of Israel from the north and the subsequent total destruction of the coalition of invading forces once they reach the area of *the mountains of Israel*. It appears that there is a preemptive attack

by the Israelites with a nuclear weapons exchange that results in a seven-year clean-up period. It is first necessary to look at all the details of the invasion in order to accurately decipher these passages. They have particular relevancy to the world in the twenty-first century. We will finish our study with determining the timing of the invasion.

Ezekiel 38: 1-6 And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: and I will turn thee about, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them handling swords; Persia, Cush, and Put with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer, and all his hordes; the house of Togarmah in the uttermost parts of the north, and all his hordes; even many peoples with thee. (ASV 1901)

At the beginning of this prophecy we see Ezekiel receiving a prophecy from the God of the universe and he is told to “set his face” against Gog of the land of Magog and that he is the chief prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. Ezekiel as God’s representative is in direct opposition to the man Gog and his goals. In the beginning of this section of Scripture the focus is on one person named Gog, the leader of the land of Magog. He is further described as the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. Gog is not a name but a title much like King, or Kaiser or Czar. The unidentified person who will be leading this alliance will be Ezekiel’s Gog at the time of the invasion. Some have referred to Vladimir Zhirinovsky the notorious Russian Jew hater as the *One Who Would Be Gog*.

Vladimir Zhirinovsky the ultra Russian nationalists is presently a four time presidential hopeful. In the December 1993 elections he was elected to the Russian parliament. His Liberal Democratic Party shocked the nation by receiving twenty-five percent of the votes cast. This is the party that has been compared to Hitler’s Nazi party. Liberal Democrat in the Russian sphere of political influence has a different meaning than what we are accustomed to in the United States. Some call them ultranationalists. This kind of nationalism often has as its avowed goal racial, ethnic, or religious purity. Zhirinovsky has written extensively of the future war that Russia must engage in with the people to the south. His autobiography titled the “Last Dash to the South” discusses the Russian fate of attacking the Mediterranean people in Russia’s last great war. He, like Hitler has claimed that the Jews are infecting the nation and were responsible for both World War I and II. He sees Israel as a nation with tremendous wealth. He says that he envies the Jews because they are the richest nation in the world! While he may not be Gog his attitude, rhetoric, and fervor would lead one to believe that God’s prophecy is immanent. Scripture does not identify a person here, only a title along with some interesting characteristics, which he possesses. The Bible states that even though God is against him God will nevertheless lead him and his allied armed forces against the Jews. The phrase in the text is written as God speaking in the first person singular “I will put hooks in your cheeks (jaws) and bring thee forth with all your army.”

In order to understand the people/countries involved it is important to determine who exactly are:

1. Magog
2. Rosh
3. Mechech
4. Tubal
5. Persia
6. Put
7. Gomer
8. Togarmah

We must look back to Genesis in order to see which people groups God is referring to in His exposition of these passages. God always uses the same names throughout the Scriptures that have been presented in earlier genealogies of mankind. When Noah, his wife and three sons Shem, Ham and Japheth left the ark after it landed on Mount Ararat after the worldwide flood they began to migrate to different directions.

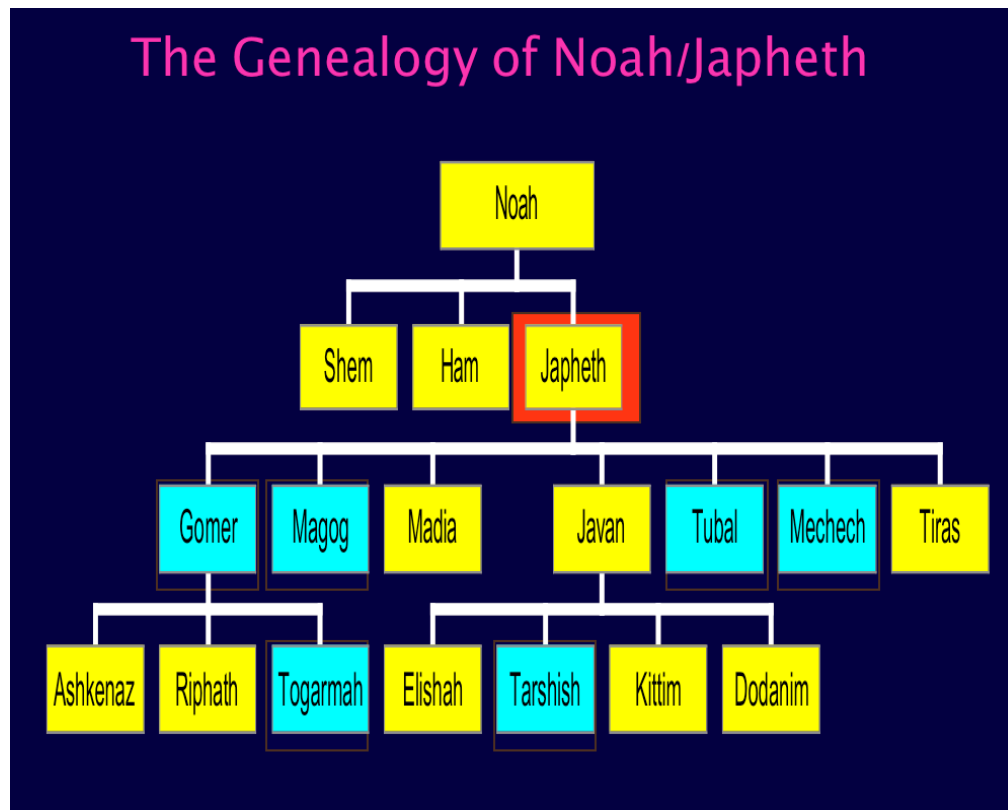


One important consideration of which to be aware of in the Bible is that individual countries names are always referenced to their ancient tribal name. For example the

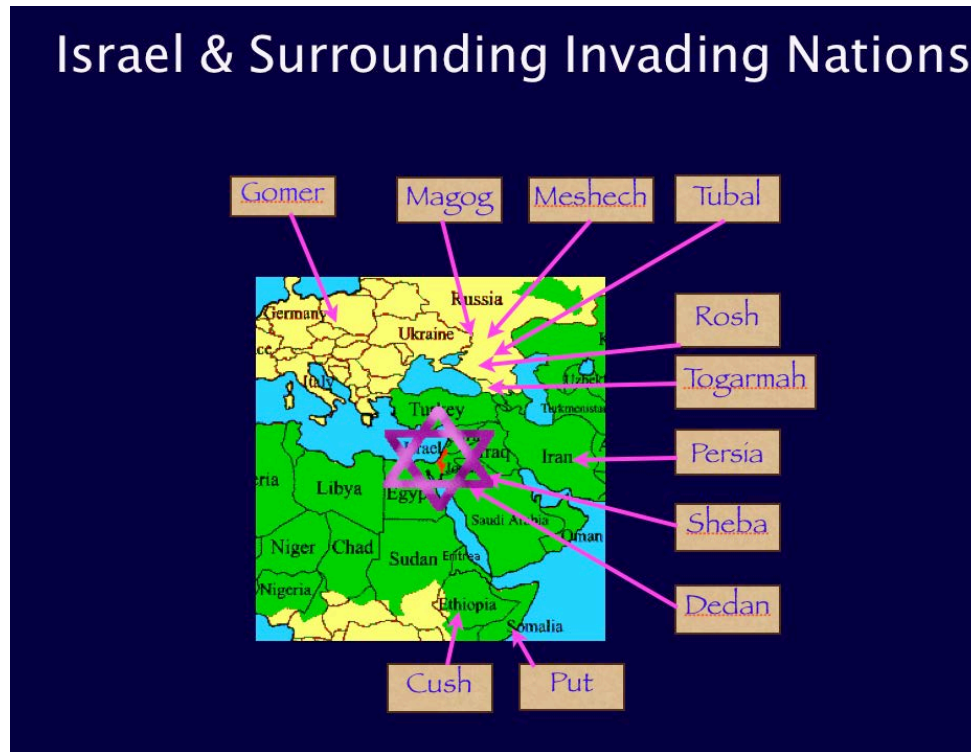
identification of Magog, Rosh, Meshech and Tubal is determined from Japheth's progeny that populated the ancient world in the areas of modern day Russia (see map on previous page and chart of this page). The three sons of Noah all migrated in different directions from Ararat after the Flood. Magog, Meshech and Tubal were located between the Black and Caspian Seas, which today is Southern Russia. It also includes part of Iran (ancient Persia) and Turkey. Accordingly, the tribes of Meshech and Tubal later became cities that today are called Moscow, the capital, and Tobolsk, is a major city in the Urals in Siberia. *Rosh* was in what is now Northern Russia.

The map on the preceding page clearly demonstrates the migration patterns of the sons of Noah from Genesis after the flood. Note that Japheth's migration is toward the north between the Black and Caspian Seas and on into the Russian Steppes region. He also went to the Northwest into Southeastern Europe. The migratory pattern of Japheth as seen in the map clearly demonstrates that modern day Turkey was a settling spot for some of the Japhethites. God highlighted Turkey and Southern Russia to demonstrate where the invaders to the north would come from. The geographic region where the invasion will come from allows us to see how the coalition forces organize around Gog from the north and are comprised of the nations that exerted the worst Jewish persecutions that have ever occurred, specifically, those that came from Russia, German and the Muslim nations.

From Genesis Chapter 10 we can see who the sons of Noah are and in particular **Japheth** and his progeny were as well as the directions they migrated.



We must look back to Genesis in order to see which people groups God is referring to in His exposition of these passages. God always uses the same names throughout the Scriptures that have been presented in earlier genealogies of mankind. When Noah, his wife and three sons Shem, Ham and Japheth left the ark after it landed on Mount Ararat after the worldwide flood they began to migrate to different directions.



The identification of Magog, Rosh, Meshech and Tubal is determined from Japheth's progeny that populated the ancient world in the areas of modern day Russia. Magog, Meshech and Tubal were located between the Black and Caspian Seas, which today is Southern Russia. It also includes part of Iran and Turkey. According to some, the tribes of Meshech and Tubal later gave names to cities that today bear the names of Moscow, the capital, and Tobolsk, a major city in the Urals in Siberia. *Rosh* was in what is now Northern Russia. The name *Rosh* is the basis for the modern name Russia. These names, then, cover the modern territories of northern and southern Russia in Europe and Siberia to the east in Asia. The modern nation of Russia encompasses all these areas of Ezekiel. As if to avoid any possible doubt, verse six adds *that these come from the uttermost parts of the north*. This is repeated in 38:15 and 39:2. From Israel the uttermost parts of the north is Russia, with Moscow being almost a straight line due north from Jerusalem. Therefore, Russia is the leader of the northern confederacy, with Gog as the leader of Russia. This has also been the rabbinic view. The Artscroll Commentary on Ezekiel written by Rabbi Moshe Eisemann states:

The Gaonim had a tradition that these controls were indeed located in Russia.. One tradition passed down from the Vilna Gaon states: When the Russian navy passed through the Bosphores on the way to the Dardanelles, it

will be time to put on Sabbath clothes, in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah.

In the Gog and Magog war, Messiah the son of Joseph will be killed which will then bring the coming of the Messiah the son of David.

But Russia is not alone in the invasion of Israel. She is part of a confederacy and the leader of it. Other nations are listed in verses 5-6. Involved in the confederacy is *Persia*, or present day Iran. Once, Iran was generally pro-western and pro-Israel; after the Khomeini Islamic revolution, Iran became anti-western and anti-Israel and more within the Russian sphere of influence. Israel and now the United States consider Iran their most dangerous enemy. Another nation involved is one called *Cush*. In the Bible there were two places that had that name. One was in Mesopotamia (Gen 2:13). But all other usages of this word refer to Ethiopia. While looking at current events, it is tempting to identify it with the Mesopotamian countries of Syria and Iraq. Consistent with the usage of the word “Cush” elsewhere in the Scriptures demands its identification with Ethiopia. Current events must never be the basis for interpreting Scripture.

Put is mentioned next, which is not Libya (for which the name Lub would be used), but Somaliland or Somalia. Somalia borders Ethiopia. This is followed by *Gomer*, located in present day Germany. This too was the rabbinic view. The *Midrash* calls *Gomer Germania*. And that is also the way the *Talmud* refers to Gomer. The last name is Togarmah, which is present day Armenia. Verse six adds the phrase, *even many peoples with you*. This phrase may simply define the numbers of the nations already mentioned, or it may include other nations not mentioned. In all probability, it is the former that is meant. In answer as to *who* is involved in this confederacy, it is Russia and the allied states of Iran, Ethiopia, Somalia, Germany and Armenia.

These nations are located geographically north and south of Israel but the controlling nation is Russia. The invasion comes from the north.

While the names of these nations have changed over the centuries (e.g. Persia to Iran) and may change again, the geography itself remains intact. Regardless of what names they may carry at the time of this invasion it is these very geographical areas that are involved. The Orthodox Jewish commentary Artscroll written by Rabbi Moshe Eisemann regarding Ezekiel 38:2 makes this additional observation:

“Yerushalayim Megillah 3:9, which renders Magog as Guitya (or Gutya...) the Goths, a group of nomadic tribes who destroyed the Scythians and made their home in Scythian territory.

Considering that the Goths were a Germanic people, the identification of Magog’s descendants as the Goths in accord with Targum Yonasan to Genesis 10:2, which renders Magog as Geramenia, which in Bereshit Rabbah 37:1 is given as Germania.



The cup of iniquity of Russia is almost full. With this invasion it will overflow, and this will precipitate God's judgment on Russia. It is God Who is in control; it is He who is bringing the invasion about. We can see the sovereignty of God in this invasion. This will be the means by which God will punish Russia for her long history of Jewish persecution.

Ezekiel 38: 7-9 Be thou prepared, yea, prepare thyself, thou, and all thy companies that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, that is gathered out of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel, which have been a continual waste; but it is brought forth out of the peoples, and they shall dwell securely, all of them. And thou shalt ascend, thou shalt come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy hordes, and many peoples with thee.

This section discussed the concept as to where the invasion takes place. The passage continues to address Gog as the leader of this confederacy (v.7). In verse eight, the specific place where the invasion takes place is stated to be the Land of Israel, more specifically in the mountains of Israel. Then verse nine describes the massiveness of the invasion, picturing it as a storm cloud that covers the entire Land. This is another passage that shows the necessity of the establishment of the Jewish State and also a regathering in unbelief. Israel has to be a state before this invasion can occur. Furthermore, Israel is gathered in unbelief since after the invasion occurs many in Israel turn to the Lord. Verse eight describes this Jewish State as being *first*, a land brought back from the sword; *second*, a land that is gathered out of many peoples; and *third*, a land with mountains that have been continual waste; and *fourth*, a land that is brought forth out of the peoples.

Ezekiel is not describing an Israel that ever existed in ancient times, but all these statements are true of modern day Israel. This began occurring toward the end of the nineteenth century, culminating with statehood in 1948. Since then the waste places have been rebuilt and resettled on a more massive scale. Speaking specifically of the “latter years” is a direct reference to the last days or the end times. Christ gave us the information necessary to continue to validate the timing of the last days. In his Olivet Discourse he told the Jewish Apostles, Peter, James John and Andrew and who were asking questions of Him exactly when the last days would occur (Matthew 24:7-8; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:10-11).

Having provided for His disciples certain characteristics that would in no way indicate that the end had begun, Jesus next proceeded to answer the third question asked by the apostles, which concerned the sign that the end of the age had truly begun.

THE MATTHEW ACCOUNT READS:

Mat 24:7-8

For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these [are] the beginning of sorrows.

According to all three Gospel writers, the sign of the end of the age is said to be when *nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom*. This act will be coupled with famines and earth quakes in various places and then Jesus clearly stated that this would be the beginning of travail (sorrows). The term travail means “birth pang”. It refers to the series of birth pangs that a woman undergoes before giving birth to a baby. The prophets pictures the last days as a series of birth pangs before the birth of the Messianic Age, which we call the Millennial Kingdom. The beginning of travail, the first birth pang and the sign that the end of the age has begun is when nation rises against, nation and kingdom against kingdom. It is important to find out just exactly where this idiom is used in the Bible. It is used in at least two passages.

FIRST IT IS FOUND IN:

Isaiah 19:1-4 The burden of Egypt. Behold, Jehovah rideth upon a swift cloud, and cometh unto Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall tremble at his presence; and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it. And I will stir up the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbor; city against city, [and] kingdom against kingdom. And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst of it; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek unto the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards. And I will give over the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, Jehovah of hosts.

Here the land of Egypt is in view and the idiom points to a conflict *all over the land of Egypt* as the nation is engrossed in a civil war.

SECOND IT IS FOUND IN:

II Chronicles 15:1-7: And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded: and he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: Jehovah is with you, while ye are with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. Now for a long season Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law: But when in their distress they turned unto Jehovah, the God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them. And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in; but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the lands. And they were broken in pieces, nation against nation, and city against city; for God did vex them with all adversity. But be ye strong, and let not your hands be slack; for your work shall be rewarded.

In this passage it is the Middle East that is in view, and the idiom points to conflict all over the Middle East. In the Olivet Discourse it is the *whole world* that is in view. This is clear from Matthew 24: 14; 21; 30 and 31. Hence the idiom refers to a worldwide conflict and this world wide conflict is the first birth pang, signifying that the end of the age or the last days had begun.

Jesus had already clearly stated that local wars between a few nations would not indicate that the end had begun. But when He said that when there is "nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom," this would mean the end of the age has begun.

To gain a fuller understanding of what the idiom "nation against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" means, it is necessary to turn to the Jewish usage of these statements. Clearly the Bible passages we just read show the usage and context of that usage. This expression then used in the Olivet Discourse is a Hebrew idiom for a world war. This is quite in keeping with the Jewish writings of this same period. Two Jewish sources known as the Zohar Chadash and the Bereshit Rabbah explain this too.

THE ZOHAR CHADASH STATES:

"At that time wars shall be stirred up in the world. Nation shall be against nation and city against city; much distress shall be renewed against the enemies of the Israelites."

BERESHIT RABBAH STATES:

"If you shall see the kingdoms rising against each other in turn, then give heed and note the footsteps of the Messiah (XLII: 4)

The Rabbis clearly taught that a worldwide conflict would signal the coming of the Messiah. Jesus corrected this idea slightly, for He said that when the world war *occurs*, while it does not signal the coming of the Messiah, it will signal that the end of the age has begun. These birth pangs that Jesus talked about are the same as the footsteps the rabbis talked about. The "footsteps of the Messiah" had to do with a series of events that lead up to the coming of the Messiah

World war I, 1914-1918, was the fulfillment of this particular prophecy, for that was the first time the entire world was at war. As virtually all historians agree, World War II was merely a continuation of World War I. Furthermore; both world wars had a decisive impact on Jewish history. World War I gave impetus to the growth of the Zionist movement, and World War II led to the re-establishment of the Jewish State. Since WW I, history has entered the last days of the Church Age. However, the last days are an extended period of time.

The sign that the end of the age has begun is the worldwide conflict fulfilled by World War I and World War II.

However, Jesus does describe these calamities as the beginning of sorrows, which is literally the beginning of labor pains; the idea is both of giving birth to a new age, and implying an increase of intensity and frequency in these calamities.

Ezekiel 38: 10-13 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: It shall come to pass in that day, that things shall come into thy mind, and thou shalt devise an evil device: and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates; to take the spoil and to take the prey; to turn thy hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and against the people that are gathered out of the nations, that have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the middle of the earth. Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take the spoil? hast thou assembled thy company to take the prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take great spoil?

This section discusses the concept as to why this invasion takes place on the part of Russia:

The key reason for the Russian invasion is the matter of spoil (vv.10-12). Exactly what Israel has that Russia would want is not spelled out in the text. The text simply mentions cattle and goods and silver and gold, but there are general Old Testament references for spoils of war. Much speculation has been promulgated as to what it is that Israel has that the Russians want. One of the most popular reasons is that of the Dead Sea, which contains 45 billion tons of sodium, chlorine, sulfur, potassium, calcium, magnesium, and bromide. Another reason centers on the oil crisis. The purpose of the invasion might be to gain a solid foothold in the Middle East without upsetting the Muslims. The Muslims would welcome any help in destroying Israel. The text states (v.10) that the reason is for Russia's own premeditated effort, for they *devise an evil thing and* resolve to invade for the purpose of spoils. (vv. 11-12)

In verse 13 a second group of nations are listed as protesting this invasion, for they recognize it to be an invasion for spoil and for nothing else. Sheba and Dedan are countries in northern Arabia, which shows that at least some of the Arab state will not

favor the Russian presence in the Middle East. Another nation is Tarshish followed by the phrase *with all the young lions thereof*. The phrase refers to the nations that have come out of Tarshish. Tarshish may mean, Spain, England or Africa. Therefore the nations that have come out of these countries are the young lions thereof. Regardless of the exact identity of the nations it does not go beyond the protest stage. Russia succeeds in invading, and then the invading army is disposed of with no help from the protestors.

Ezekiel 38:14-16 Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: In that day when my people Israel dwelleth securely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost parts of the north, thou, and many peoples with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army; and thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land: it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring thee against my land, that the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

In verses 14-16a, the invasion begins and the confederate army covers the land like a storm could in a massive swarm. Israel is a nation now and has reasonable security knowing that they have statehood. They come from the uttermost part of the north. Moscow is in a direct line north of Jerusalem. Then there is initial success on the part of Russia. In verse 16b, God's reason is given for allowing this invasion to come to pass, as over against Russia's reasons given in the preceding verse: that He might be sanctified in the eyes of the nations in light of what is about to happen. Further, He calls Israel "My Land." God will prove to all who will listen to Him that He is always correct and in complete control of all events on the earth. He does things for His own pleasure and will extract vengeance on those that have harmed His Jewish children, the apple of His eye.

The Destruction of the Invaders- Ezekiel 38:17-23

Having described God's purpose, which is to bring glory to Himself, the text moves on to to discuss what and how all this, is going to happen.

Ezekiel 38:17-23 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Art thou he of whom I spake in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, that prophesied in those days for [many] years that I would bring thee against them? And it shall come to pass in that day, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah, that my wrath shall come up into my nostrils. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the heavens, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him unto all my mountains, saith the Lord Jehovah: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And with pestilence

and with blood will I enter into judgment with him; and I will rain upon him, and upon his hordes, and upon the many peoples that are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. And I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.

As to the question of what, with the Russian invasion of Israel, the cup of iniquity is full, for the apple of God's eye is touched, and the Wife of Jehovah is violated, arousing god's anger to that He moves out in judgment (vv. 17-18) to destroy the invading army. This is followed by the answer to the question of how the invading army is disposed of and destroyed. Several causes are listed: earthquake (vv.19-20); civil war breaking out among the invading soldiers themselves (v.21); pestilence, blood, flood, hailstones, fire, and brimstone (v.22). Since these things totally destroy the invading army without the aid of other nations, God's purpose is seen as succeeding in its objective. God is indeed sanctified in the eyes of many people (v.23)

The Place of the Destruction – Ezekiel 39:1-6

Ezekiel 39:1-6 follows a common hermeneutical "Law of Recurrence" which gives further details to the information as found in chapter 38. In 39:1-5 there is a further description of the invasion and its subsequent destruction.

Ezekiel 39:1-6 And thou, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: and I will turn thee about, and will lead thee on, and will cause thee to come up from the uttermost parts of the north; and I will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel; and I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy hordes, and the peoples that are with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon the open field; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah. And I will send a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell securely in the isles; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.

The new information added is found in verses two and four, where the armies are said to fall specifically on the mountains of Israel. They extend the length of the center of the country, beginning at the southern point of the Valley of Jezreel at the town of Jenin in Galilee (Biblical Ein and Ganim) and continuing south until they stop at a point north of Beersheba in the Negev. These mountains contain the famous biblical cities of Dothan, Shechem, Samaria, Shiloh, Bethel, Ai, Ramah, Bethlehem, Hebron, Debir, and most importantly Jerusalem., which seems to be the goal of the invading army.

Here is another example where the six-day way has set the stage for the fulfillment of prophecy. Up to the Six Day War in 1967 all of the mountains of Israel, except for a small corridor of West Jerusalem, were entirely in the hands of the Jordanians. Only since 1967 have the mountains of Israel been in Israel, thus setting the

stage for the fulfillment of this prophecy. Another thing to notice is the mistranslation in the KJV, which says that one-sixth of the invading army, is left alive. This is not true and has not been translated in subsequent word for word translations.

In Ezekiel 39:6 another dimension is added to the Russian invasion.

Ezekiel 39:6 And I will send a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell securely in the isles; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.

Not only is the Russian and allied army destroyed, but the land of Russia itself is devastated by the raining of brimstone, causing much destruction in the nation itself. It will cause Russia to cease being a political force in world affairs.

The Sanctification of God's Name Ezekiel 39:7-8

Not only will God's name be sanctified among the Gentile nations, but in Israel as well.

Ezekiel 39:7-8 And my holy name will I make known in the midst of my people Israel; neither will I suffer my holy name to be profaned any more: and the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel. Behold, it cometh, and it shall be done, saith the Lord Jehovah; this is the day whereof I have spoken.

Thus a revival occurs in Israel, causing many Jews to turn to the Lord.

The Seven Years of Burning – Ezekiel 39:9-10

The rest of the section provides the grand finale of the invasion. In Ezekiel 39:9-10 it states that it will take seven years to dismantle all the military equipment left behind, which will in turn be used for fuel:

Ezekiel 39:9-10 And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall make fires of the weapons and burn them, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall make fires of them seven years; so that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall make fires of the weapons; and they shall plunder those that plundered them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord Jehovah.

If these are nuclear weapons it makes sense that they could burn for seven years. In our next and last session we will discuss weaponry both modern and ancient in light of the Hebrew words used in the text. We will also discuss the timing of the invasion relative to the Great Tribulation.

Finally in Ezekiel 39:11-16 there is a description of the burying of the dead and they seem to wait for seven months before they start:

Ezekiel 39:11-16 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of them that pass through on the east of the sea; and it shall stop them that pass through: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude; and they shall call it The valley of Hamon-gog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown in the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord Jehovah. And they shall set apart men of continual employment, that shall pass through the land, and, with them that pass through, those that bury them that remain upon the face of the land, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. And they that pass through the land shall pass through; and when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. And Hamonah shall also be the name of a city. Thus shall they cleanse the land.

The burial place will be in one of the valleys east of the Mediterranean Sea (v.11), which would put it in the Jordan Valley north of the Dead Sea and will be renamed accordingly. It may take seven months before they accomplish the job. It may also be that they wait seven months before they start to gather the dead. The Hebrew suggests they wait seven months. We are not sure of this. In any event there is a 7-month period associated with the burying process. (vv.12-13). Because of the contamination of the bodies they may wait seven months before they start. (vv. 14_15) Overlooking the cemetery a new city will be built and named Hamonah, which means “multitude.” (v.16).

When entering the area and they do not go in casually. The KJV reads “they sever out men of continual employment” which is phrase for “professionals.” These will not be amateurs, these will not be part timers, and they will know what they are doing.

These will be professionals called in to bury the bones, downwind of the Dead Sea. If someone traveling through spots a bone that was missed, he is not to touch it, but to put up a sign by it so the professionals can bury it downwind.

This is interesting technology for Ezekiel. God stages an event where the Russians invade Israel and get clobbered by the Jews with a technology that shakes the whole earth, and fire will fall upon Magog and a lot of other people as well. Then they are going to spend seven months before they even go into that battle area. After all this the Jews will send in professionals to bury the dead carefully by special procedures.

These seven months of burying or waiting to bury and the seven years of burning are crucial in determining *when* this invasion occurs.

THE TIMING OF THE INVASION:

The most controversial question is when; *when* in the chronology of prophecy will this event take place? It is to take place *sometime before* the Great tribulation.

Basic Observations:

In determining the issue of when, certain clues are to be found in the text. In 38:8, 11-2 and 14 the invasion takes place when, *first*, Israel is a state again; *second*, the waste places of past centuries are again inhabited; *third*, Israel is dwelling in unwalled villages, a good description of present day *kibbutzim* and fourth, *Israel* is dwelling securely. Nowhere in the entire text does God say that Israel is living in peace. Rather, Israel is merely living securely, which means “confidence,” regardless of whether it is during a state of war or peace.

There is nothing in the various descriptions of Israel given in this passage that is not true of Israel today, including their possession of nuclear weapons. So, as far as where Israel stands, she completely fulfills all the requirements given in the description of Israel in this passage. From that standpoint, the invasion can occur at any time, including some time before the Tribulation.

Furthermore, there is the problem of the seven years and the seven months, which must be taken into account in resolving the issue of *when*.

THERE ARE FOUR MAJOR VIEWS OF WHEN THIS OCCURS.

1. The Midtribulation View
2. The Posttribulation/Armageddon View
3. The Interlude View
4. The End of the Millennium View
5. The Pretribulation View

All of the views except *the Pretribulation view* fail to accommodate the seven years and the seven months.

From the text of Ezekiel 38:1-39:16 this view arrives at certain conclusions.

1. *First*, Israel is established before the Tribulation and is dwelling securely.
2. *Second*, the Russian confederacy invades Israel during this time of security before the Tribulation.
3. *Third*, the confederacy is destroyed in Israel before the Tribulation.

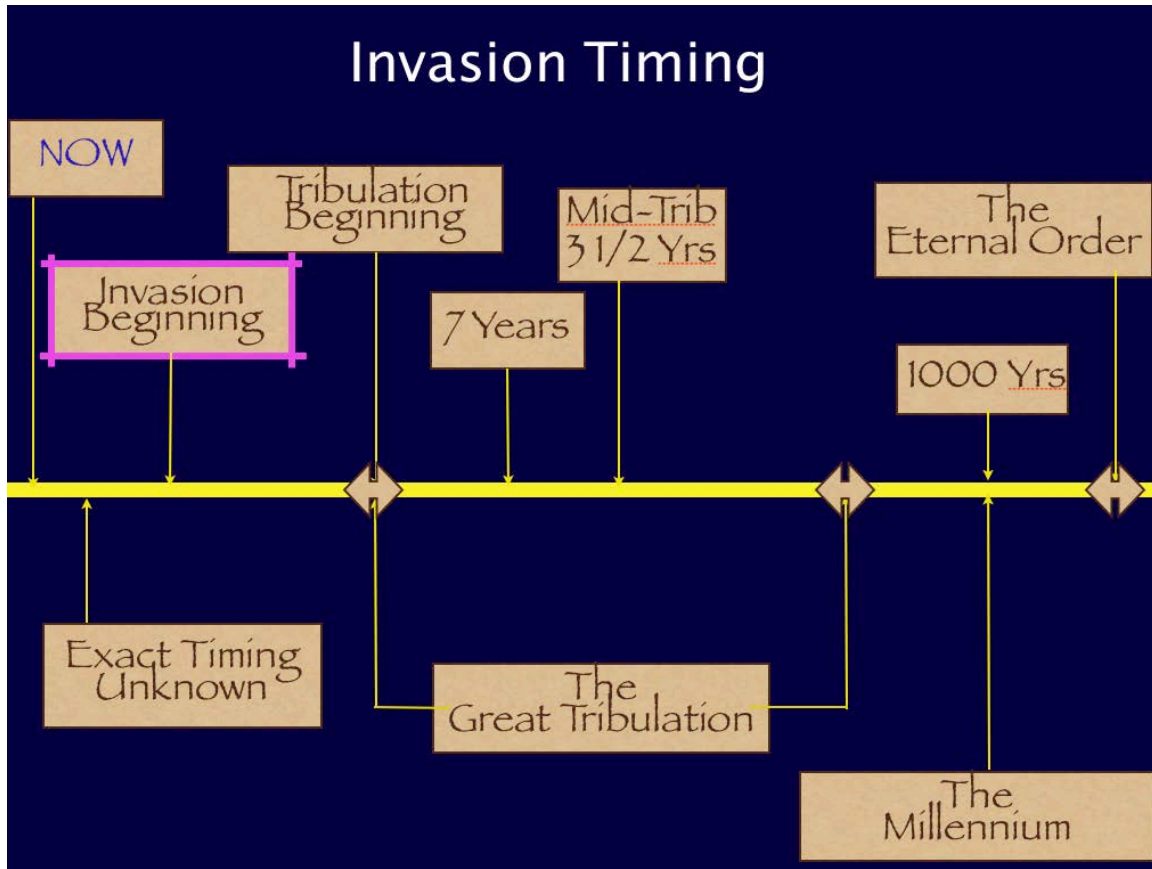
There are several points supporting this view.

1. *First*, the description of Israel in this passage fits well with the nation as she is now, established before the Tribulation. Israel is a land brought back from the sword (38:8). After 1900 years, 46 invasions, and the War of Independence, this Land is Jewish again and free from foreign domination. This nation is gathered from many nations and peoples (38:8,12). The Jews in Israel today come from 80-90 different nations. The continual waste places are now inhabited (38:8,12). The Israelis today are rebuilding the ancient places and turning them into modern towns and cities. They dwell securely (38:11,14). This has often been misconstrued to mean a state of peace, but this is not the meaning of the Hebrew root *batach*. The nominal form of this root means “security.” This is not the security due to a state of peace, but a security due to a confidence in their own strength and their status of a sovereign nation. This, too, is a good description of

Israel today. The Israeli army has fought four major wars since its founding and won them swiftly each time. Today Israel is secure, confident that her army can repel any invasion from the Arab states. Therefore, Israel is dwelling securely. Israel is dwelling in unwalled villages (38:11). This is very descriptive of the present day *kibbutzim* in Israel.

2. *Second*, Russia today in spite of the fall of communism is still a major world power before the Tribulation. Their rise to that position coincided with the reestablishment of Israel following World War II.
3. *Third*, this view best answers the problems of the seven months and the seven years. Putting this invasion in the *beginning of the Tribulation* presents no real problems with the seven months but it does have problems with the seven years. This would put it at a time when Israel would be in flight and not have time to finish burning the weapons. *The middle Tribulation* view has problems with both the seven months and the seven years. The seven months would extend into the second half of the Tribulation, a time when Israel has to worry about her own dead, let alone the Russians. The seven years would extend into the rest of the Tribulation and 3 ½ years into the Millennium, making it inconsistent with the biblical view of the Millennium. Furthermore, Israel would need these weapons in the second half of the Tribulation. *The end of the Tribulation* view has problems with both the seven months and the seven years since both would extend into the Millennium. *The interlude or beginning of the Millennium* view has problems with both the seven months and the seven years since both would extend into the Millennium due to the fact that the interlude is only 75 days. *The end of the Millennium* view has problems with both the seven months and the seven years. The seven months of burial seem pointless when there is a resurrection after this invasion. The seven years would have to extend into the Eternal Order, which is an impossibility since there is a whole new earth created.

Therefore the only view that has no problems is the ***Before the Tribulation view***. This view accommodates both the seven months and the seven years. The Jews continue to dwell securely in the Land after the invasion and remain there until the middle of the Tribulation. Hence the seven months of burial is no problem chronologically. The seven years of burning also create no chronology logistics problems since they would begin before the Tribulation and can extend as far as the middle of the Tribulation if necessary. According to this view the invasion must take place at least 3 ½ years or more before the Tribulation begins.



OBJECTIONS TO THIS VIEW:

1. Passage is in the restoration of Ezekiel. (Which restoration? unbelief or belief)
2. Dwelling securely
3. Doctrine of immanency
4. Israel's apostasy
5. Latter days.
6. Israel and the title to the land.

For additional information or questions contact:

Daniel E. Woodhead at 616-928-0974 or e-mail at Daniel.Woodhead@pentwaterbiblechurch.com